

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
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R 271245Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5647
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY WARSAW

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E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: XF, XA, XI, LY, CZ
SUBJECT: QADHAFI VISIT TO PRAGUE

REF SOFIA 1180

1. IT WAS NOT DOUBT WITH SOME RELIEF THAT CZECHOSLOVAK OFFICIALS SAW COLONEL QADHAFI AND HIS LARGE ENTOURAGE OFF AT THE PRAGUE AIRPORT JUNE 23. CASUAL TRADITIONS OF THE ARAB WORLD REGARDING PUNCTUALITY KEPT MFA PROTOCOL OFFICERS GUESSING, WHILE TV COVERAGE OF OFFICIAL TALKS SHOWED SOME GOC OFFICIALS APPARENTLY DAZED BY LIBYAN RHETORIC AND BARGAINING TECHNIQUES.

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2. AS IN SOFIA, QADHAFI WAS OVER ONE HOUR LATE FOR THE RECEPTION GIVEN JUNE 20 TO INTRODUCE HIM TO THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS. U.S., FRG AND AMBASSADORS LEFT BEFOR QADHAFI ARRIVED, FOLLOWED BY A FEW OTHERS. AMBASSADORS OF EUROPEAN NEUTRALS WISHED TO FOLLOW THEIR EXAMPLE BUT FELT CONSTRAINED NOT TO. CEREMONY WAS EVENTUALLY QUICK WALK-PAST TO SHAKE HANDS WITH QADHAFI: RECEPTION SCHEDULED TO FOLLOW WAS CANCELLED. ON SAME DAY QADHAFI

FAILED TO APPEAR FOR WREATH-LAYING CEREMONY WHICH WAS CARRIED OUT FOLLOWING DAY.

3. AS THE ONLY OVERTLY MILITARY EVENT IN HIS VISIT, QADHAFI TOURED THE CZECHOSLOVAK AVIATION PLANT IN VODOCHODY AND WAS SHOWN THE CZECH-BUILT L-39 JET TRAINER, A MODEL OF WHICH WAS GIVEN HIM IN A "SYMBOLIC" GESTURE. IN THE MEANTIME MEMBERS OF QADHAFI'S ENTOURAGE, FOREIGN MINISTER TRIKI, THE LIBYAN SECRETARIES OF COMMERCE AND TRADE, AND THE SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE ALL HELD TALKS WITH THEIR COUNTERPARTS. PRESS ACCOUNTS MENTION NO DISCUSSION OF OIL SUPPLIES.

4. EGYPTIAN DIPLOMAT TOLD US QADHAFI CANCELLED PLANS TO MEET WITH ARAB AMBASSADORS AND STUDENTS, BUT DID NOT ELABORATE. (THE EGYPTIANS WERE WATCHING THE VISIT WITH ACUTE INTEREST, BUT FROM A DISTANCE). SAME EGYPTIAN TOLD US QADHAFI MET WITH THE LOCAL PLO REPRESENTATIVE, ABU BAKR. GOC HAD ORGANIZED WILDLY-CHEERING ARAB ATTENDANCE AT DEPARTURE AND ARRIVAL CEREMONIES, BUT EGYPTIAN COULD SHED NO LIGHT ON THEIR NATIONALITY OR IDENTITY.

5. REPORTS OF THE TALKS BETWEEN HUSAK AND QADHAFI SUGGEST THAT AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST ACCOUNTED FOR A LARGE SHARE OF THE DISCUSSIONS, WHICH REPALED "IDENTITY OR PROXIMITY" OF VIEWS ON MAJOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ISSUES. THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE, PUBLISHED JUNE 24, EXPRESSES THE CONCERN OF BOTH PARTIES OVER "DANGEROUS CHANGES" IN AMERICAN POLICY OF LATE, OVER NATO PLANS TO BEEF UP FORCES IN EUROPE AND OVER "CONTINUING ATTEMPTS TO INTERFERE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF OTHER STATES." IN REMARKS AT THE STATE DINNER JUNE 20, QADHAFI SAID PROGRESSIVE ARAB FORCES KNOW THE "SOCIALIST COUNTRIES" ARE THEIR "NATURAL ALLY" IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST "IMPERIALISM, ZIONISM, AND REACTION."

6. FINAL EVENT OF VISIT PERHAPS TYPIFIED IT. AS QADHAFI'S AIRCRAFT HEADED FOR RUNWAY, FOLLOW-UP LIBYAN AIR LINES AIRCRAFT LOST ITS WAY ON TAXI STRIP AND HAD TO BE HERDED BACK ON COURSE BY GUIDE VEHICLE. DECONTROL FOUR YEARS FROM ORIGINATING DATE. BYRNE

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